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distinct family of Lamnoid sharks from Japan under the name of *Mitsukurina rustoni*. The genus is apparently unique among living forms, its nearest living relative being the genus Odontaspis of Agassiz, a group which contains few recent sharks, but which is rich in fossil forms.

American Gordiacea. — Dr. T. H. Montgomery concludes his second paper on Gordiacea of certain American collections (*Proc. Cal. Acad. Sci.*, Ser. 3, *Zoöl.*, Vol. I, No. 9) with a synoptical key for determining the species of Gordiacea of the North American continent north of Mexico.

Development of the Eel. — An excellent summary of our knowledge regarding the development of the eel is given by Dr. A. König in *Mittheil. d. Sect. f. Naturk. des Oesterreich. Touristen Club*, X, Nos. 8 and 9.

BOTANY.

A New School Botany. — The modern reaction against the old-fashioned way of making elementary botanical instruction consist chiefly in "analyzing" flowers is well exemplified in the present text-book.[1] With the recommendation that "analysis" be postponed, "even though the pupil may pursue it independently at a later time," the author introduces the student at once to a physiological and microscopical study of the protoplasm and vegetative organs of a few Algal, Fungal, Bryophytic, Pteridophytic, and Spermatophytic types. These same types, together with others, are then studied in the second part as regards their morphology, reproductive processes, and life history. This part ends with a cursory view of some of the more important families of flowering plants. A final part devoted to ecology calls attention to a few examples of interesting adaptations of various organs to the work of nutrition, protection, pollination, dissemination, and germination, and directs the student to profitable lines of study in geographical distribution with special reference to plant formations. In an appendix suggestions are given for the collection and preservation of material, note taking, etc.

The illustrations are mostly good, some being of unusual excellence. Certain of the photographic views, however, seem too hazy and confused to be of much significance to a beginner. A few of the drawings, as, for example, Figs. 44, 119, 189, 191, 192, 231, 232, 452, and 453, fall decidedly below the general standard of the book. Fig. 431 lacks the lettering necessary to make it significant.

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[1] Atkinson, Ph.B., George Francis, Professor of Botany in Cornell University. *Elementary Botany*. New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1898. xxiii + 444 pp., 509 illustrations. Cloth 12mo. $1.25.

Given a teacher well trained in physiological and microscopical work and a good school laboratory well equipped with modern though not expensive apparatus, this book will be found helpful and stimulating to both teacher and pupil. The student, however, if a beginner in botany, will frequently require the aid of such a teacher to make clear the meaning of passages which assume a knowledge of botanical matters dealt with only in a later chapter or not included in the book at all. Moreover, technical terms are often used before they have been explained, and sometimes different forms of the same word are used without explanation in a confusing way, as, for example, "chloroplast" and "chloroplastid" (p. 67), also "pollination" and "pollenation." It seems unfortunate and entirely unnecessary that the phrase *carbon conversion* should be substituted for the well-established term *photosyntax*.

It needs hardly to be said of a book from Professor Atkinson's pen that it abounds in information which is at once accurate and up to date. The only slips on matters of fact which the reviewer has noticed are the references to Trillium as having compound leaves (p. 313), to the "coral-root" orchid as having roots (p. 320), to the common bed-straw as having several leaves in a whorl (thus ignoring the stipular character of four of the leaf-like organs), and an incorrect floral formula on p. 254.

There are many evidences of hasty preparation and careless proofreading. Slips in English are not infrequent. Thus "shall" and "will" are continually misused, and one meets with such loose expressions as "alike in substance" for homogeneous (p. 5). One is rather surprised, too, at finding the peristome of a moss described as "frazzled."

In spite of its defects, the book is one of unusual interest and will doubtless hold an important place among advanced school books on botany.

F. L. SARGENT.

Microscopic Technique.[1] — As the author states, the writing of "Practica" is to be considered a somewhat thankless task, — it might be well, indeed, were it more generally so considered, — and a

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[1] Meyer, A. *Erstes mikroskopisches Practicum.* Jena, Fischer, 1898. 100 pp., 29 figs.